Export Potential of Agricultural Products

2. SHRI HANUMANTHA RAO:
SHRI SANJAY DALMIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased Jo state:

(a) the export potential of agricultural products during the remaining period of the Eighth Five Year Plan;

(b) whether the above potential is being fully exploited; and

(c) if not, the steps taken by Government to remove these difficulties?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) to (c) The export projections for agricultural commodities Including coffee, tea, raw cotton and marine products during the remaining period of the Eighth Five Year Plan (1992-97) at 1991-92 prices arc as follow:—

Year	Export Projection (Rs. Cr.)
1995-96	11030
1996-97	12064

The international market for basic agricultural food stuffs *viz.,* cereals, dairy products, meat and sugar is constrained by not only tariff and non-tariff barriers but also by the massive export subsidies granted by the USA, EEC, etc. Lack of infrastructural facilities (like air cargo facilities not keeping pace, inadequate shipping/cold storage facilities), high air freight rates and lack of vapour treatment facilities are the major constraints hampering export of agricultural commodities.

The removal of non-tariff barriers and reduction of subsidies in the industrialised countries under the Uruguay Round Final Act are expected to open up new market opportunities for countries like India.

Under a schemes for Development of Infrastructure, the Government is providing financial assistance to eligible exporters for (i) purchase of specialised transport units, (ii) establishment of pre-cooling facilities, (iii) setting up of mechanised post harvest handling facilities and sheds for grading, sorting, quality control and packaging, (iv) establishing vapour heat treatment/ fumigation/screening machines for exports and (v) establishing could stores at airports/seaports for export purposes.

Other measures to increase exports include market development campaigns abroad and intensification of product development efforts in the country.

Export, Trading and Star Trading House Status for Exporters

3. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA: DR. SHRIKANT RAMACHAN-DRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) how many exporters have been given the status of Export House, trading House and star trading house uptill now;

(b) what are the additional benefits which the exporters have got due to this status;

(c) what are the general complaints and difficulties in the proper implementation of this scheme; and

(d) whether this scheme will be made more liberal?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI P. CHIDAMBARAM): (a) As on 15.11.95 the following numbers of exporters have valid status certificates:—

Export House	2271
Trading House	333
Star Trading House	31

In addition, 7 exporters have got valid certificates of Super Star Trading House.

(b) The benefits available to such exporters are detailed in Statement, *(see* below)

(c) No general complaints about the schemes have been received nor has any difficulty been faced in implementing the Scheme.

(d) There is no such proposal under consideration at present.

Statement

The details of benefits available to exporters holding Export House, Trading House, Star Trading House and Super Star Trading House Status arc given as under:—

i) special Import Licence either on FOB or NTE earned basis for imports of items listed in appendix XXXV of the Hand-Book of Procedures under normal Customs duty as per entitlement in terms of Para 217 A(a) of the Handbook of Procedures, Vol. I.

ii) As per entitlement, Import of Car is also allowed in terms of Para 217 A(e) of Handbook of Procedures Vol. I on normal customs duty payable in free foreign exchange out of status holders exchange earnings foreign currency (EEFC) accounts once in five years, against their valid status certificate for their official use, against their own Special Import Licence.

iii) As per Para 217 A(d) of the Handbook of Procedures Vol. 1 Import of gold & silver Against concessional rates of customs duty in free foreign exchange, provided the importer is an EEFC account holder and customs duty is paid in free foreign exchange out of EEFC account.

iv) Market Development Assistance for export promotional activities abroad.

v) Facility of submitting legal undertaking instead of Bank Guarantee to import duty free raw-materials/capital goods for the purpose of manufacturing items of exports under Duty Exemption Scheme and EPDG Scheme respectively.

vi) Green channel facility as contemplated in Para 21 B of the Policy and detailed in Para 22B of the Handbook of Procedures Vol. I.

Beedi Workers

4. SHRI S. AUSTIN: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) what is the estimated number of beedi workers covered under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme;

(b) the number of hospitals and dispensaries that cater to the health needs of beedi workers; and

(c) the steps taken to provide benefits of welfare schemes to beedi workers?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI G. VENKAT SWAMY): (a) There are about 22,000 beedi workers covered under the Employees' State Insurance Scheme.

(b) 155 Dispensaries including one Chest Clinic and 3 hospitals have been set up under the Beedi Workers' Welfare Fund for providing medical services to the beedi workers.

(c) Several steps have been taken to bring about qualitative and quantitative improvement in the welfare schemes for the beedi workers. These include all round increase in the amount of educational scholarships and the number of scholarships given 100% increase in the financial norm for purchase of medicines, major increase in the quantum of financial assistance for construction of houses etc.